

IN THE CLAIMS:

1. (currently amended) A method for controlling access to a secondary game on a gaming machine during play of a primary game, said method comprising:

presenting a preselected wager threshold to a player via at least one of a visual message and an audio message;

accepting a wager from the player via a gaming machine input device;

comparing, via a processor, the accepted wager to the preselected wager threshold;

prompting the player to increase the accepted wager when the accepted wager is less than the preselected wager threshold;

initiating the secondary game, by the gaming machine, when the accepted wager equals the preselected wager threshold, wherein initiation of the secondary game is based only on the comparison of the accepted wager to the preselected wager threshold and regardless of an outcome of the primary game; and

reporting the outcome for play of the primary game via a gaming machine primary indicator and an outcome for play of the secondary game via a gaming machine secondary indicator.

2. (previously presented) The method of claim 1, wherein accepting the wager comprises accepting the wager for play of the primary game.

3. (original) The method of claim 1, further comprising initiating the secondary game when the accepted wager exceeds the preselected threshold.

4. (original) The method of claim 1, wherein comparing the accepted wager comprises comparing the accepted wager to a maximum wager.

5. (original) The method of claim 1, wherein comparing the accepted wager comprises comparing the accepted wager to an amount less than a maximum wager.

6. (canceled)

7. (currently amended) A system for allowing secondary play on a gaming machine having a primary game and a secondary game, said system comprising:

a monitor configured to display a prestored trigger to a player via a visual message;

a determiner structured to compare a wager to the prestored trigger; and

a controller coupled to the determiner and structured to initiate the secondary game responsive to a signal received from the determiner, wherein initiation of the secondary game by the controller is based only on the comparison of the wager to the prestored trigger regardless of either a timing of the comparison of the wager to the prestored trigger and an outcome of the primary game, said controller further structured to report at least one of the outcome for play of the primary game and an outcome for play of the secondary game.

8. (original) The system of claim 7, further comprising a first indicator coupled to the primary game and a second indicator coupled to the secondary game.

9. (original) The system of claim 8, wherein the first indicator is a reel.

10. (original) The system of claim 8, wherein the second indicator is a reel.

11. (original) The system of claim 7, wherein the prestored trigger is a wager type.

12. (original) The system of claim 11, wherein the wager type is a maximum wager.

13. (original) The system of claim 7, wherein the prestored trigger is a wager amount.

14. (original) The system of claim 7, wherein the prestored trigger is a wager source.

15. (original) The system of claim 14, wherein the wager source is a player tracking card.

16. (currently amended) A method of initiating a secondary game on a gaming machine during play of a primary game, said method comprising:

determining whether a player is enrolled in a player tracking system;

permitting play on the primary game using the gaming machine;

presenting to the player via at least one of a visual message and an audio message one of a first predetermined threshold and a second predetermined threshold that is different than the first predetermined threshold, wherein the first predetermined threshold only applies to players enrolled in the player tracking system and wherein the second predetermined threshold applies to players not enrolled in the player tracking system;

accepting a wager via a gaming machine input device;

comparing, by a processor, the wager to the one of the first and second predetermined thresholds;

permitting play on a secondary game using the gaming machine when the wager equals one of the first predetermined threshold when it is determined that the player is not enrolled in the player tracking system, and the second predetermined threshold when it is determined that the player is enrolled in the player tracking system, wherein permission to play the secondary game is based only on the comparison of the wager to one of the first and second predetermined thresholds regardless of a timing of the comparison of the wager to one of the first and second predetermined thresholds;

reporting a first outcome responsive to play on the gaming machine via a first indicator; and

reporting a second outcome responsive to play on the gaming machine via a second indicator.

17. (original) The method of claim 16, wherein the first outcome is a primary game outcome and the second outcome is a secondary game outcome.

18. (original) The method of claim 16, wherein the first outcome is a secondary game outcome and the second outcome is a primary game outcome.

19. (original) The method of claim 16, wherein the first outcome is a randomly selected outcome.

20. (previously presented) The method of claim 16, wherein play on the secondary game is permitted when the wager exceeds one of the first and second predetermined thresholds.

21. (currently amended) A system for accessing a secondary game during play of a primary game, said system comprising:

a plurality of gaming machines that each comprises:

a data input device configured to accept a wager from a player;

a player tracking device configured to accept a player tracking card from the player; and

a monitor configured to display one of a first wager threshold and a second wager threshold that is different than the first wager threshold;

a server coupled to the plurality of gaming machines, wherein said server comprises:

a player tracking determiner configured to determine whether the player is enrolled in a player tracking system based on signals received from said player tracking device; and

a comparator configured to:

compare the wager to the one of the first and second wager thresholds, wherein the wager is compared to the first wager threshold if the player is not enrolled in the player tracking system, and wherein the wager is compared to the second wager threshold if the player is enrolled in the player tracking system; [[and]]

prompt the player via said monitor to increase the wager if the wager is less than the one of the first and second wager thresholds; and

generate a signal to initiate a secondary game based only on the comparison of the wager to one of the first and second wager thresholds and when the wager is at least equal to and greater than one of the first and second wager thresholds, wherein the comparison of the wager to one of the first and second wager thresholds occurs regardless of at least one of an outcome of the primary game, and a timing of the comparison of the wager to one of the first and second wager thresholds.

22. (cancelled)